

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A clam-shell handset device comprising:
a screen half that contains a display; and
a keyboard half that contains a keyboard; and
a hinge that connects the screen half to the keyboard half and allows the two to rotate with respect to each other; and
a means for the clam-shell handset device to change its mode of operation depending on the angle of the hinge.
2. The device as recited in claim 1 wherein one of the modes of operation is used to take a picture or video.
3. The device as recited in claim 2 wherein a second mode of operation is used to make or receive a phone call.
4. The device as recited in claim 1 wherein the operational mode is activated immediately when the hinge is at a specified angle.
5. The device as recited in claim 1 wherein the operational mode is activated when the hinge is at a specified angle for a pre-determined amount of time.

6. The device as recited in claim 3 wherein the hinge contains a locking mechanism to lock the hinge at an angle corresponding to a mode of operation; and
a mechanical release that releases the locking mechanism.
7. The device as recited in claim 2 wherein there are two different hinge angles that activate the camera mode; and
the direction of the screen when the hinge is at the first camera mode angle is opposite to the direction of the screen when the hinge is at the second angle.
8. The device as recited in claim 1 wherein the hinge contains a mechanism that senses when the hinge is at certain angles.
9. The device as recited in claim 1 wherein the hinge contains a cam mechanism that encourages the hinge to stay at an angle that activates a mode of operation until a force is applied to the screen half that is greater than the force required to rotate the hinge when the hinge is not at an angle that activates a mode of operation.
10. A clam-shell handset device comprising:
a screen half that contains a display; and
a keyboard half that contains keys and an image sensor; and
a hinge that connects the screen half to the keyboard half and allows the two to rotate with respect to each other; wherein

the orientation of the image sensor is along a first axis that is perpendicular to a second axis that is pointed in the same direction as the direction the keys move when they are actuated.

11. The device as recited in claim 10 wherein the keyboard half contains a camera lens.

12. The device as recited in claim 11 wherein the camera lens is in a module that is removably connected to the keyboard half.

13. The device as recited in claim 12 wherein the module contains a flash.

14. The device as recited in claim 12 wherein the module can be replaced by a second module that contains a lens with a different focal length than the lens in the first module.

15. The device as recited in claim 12 wherein the module and keyboard half communicate information over the removable connection.

16. The device as recited in claim 11 wherein the lens is located on the side of the keyboard half that both contains the hinge and is perpendicular and adjacent to the side with the keys; and

the lens is pointed orthogonal to the side on which it is located.

17. The device as recited in claim 11 wherein the lens is located on a side of the keyboard half that is both adjacent to the side with the keys and directly opposite from the side that contains the hinge; and

the lens is pointed orthogonal to the side on which it is located.

18. A clam-shell handset device comprising:

a screen half that contains a display; and

a keyboard half that contains number keys and at least one camera button; and

a hinge that connects the screen half to the keyboard half and allows the two to rotate with respect to each other; wherein

the at least one camera button is located on a side adjacent to the side that contains the number keys; and

the axis along which the at least one camera button moves when actuated is perpendicular to the axis along which the number keys move when actuated.

19. The device as recited in claim 18 wherein the button is a shutter release button.

20. The device as recited in claim 19 wherein a second button is a zoom-in button and a third button is a zoom-out button.

21. The device as recited in claim 18 wherein the button is a video record button.

22. The device as recited in claim 18 wherein keyboard half contains at least one strap.
23. The device as recited in claim 22 wherein the at least one strap is attached to the same side as the at least one button.
24. The device as recited in claim 22 wherein the at least one strap is attached to the side opposite to the side that contains the number keys.
25. The device as recited in claim 22 wherein the at least one strap has adjustable length.
26. The device as recited in claim 3 wherein a third mode is picture browsing; and
the picture browsing mode shows images stored on the device; and
the picture browsing mode is activated when the hinge is moved from the camera mode angle to the angle for making or receiving a phone call;
27. The device as recited in claim 26 wherein picture browsing mode is activated only if the hinge was at the camera mode angle for at least a predetermined amount of time before being moved to the angle for making or receiving a phone call.

28. The device as recited in claim 26 wherein picture browsing mode is activated only if a picture was taken when the hinge was at the camera mode angle before being moved to the angle for making or receiving a phone call.